

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A camera comprising:

a movable lens barrel, movable between a collapsed position of being contained inside a camera body, and at least one photographing position determined in front of said collapsed position, for holding a taking lens;

a slidable cover, movable between a closed position and an open position, for covering a front of said movable lens barrel in said collapsed position when in said closed position, and for uncovering said front of said movable lens barrel when in said open position;

a cover stopper, movable between a stopping position and a releasing position, for retaining said slidable cover in said open position when in said stopping position, and for moving back from said stopping position to said releasing position when said slidable cover moves from said open position to said closed position;

a locking mechanism, responsive to moving of said movable lens barrel, for retaining said cover stopper in said stopping position when said movable lens barrel is in said photographing position, and for allowing said cover stopper to move from said stopping position to said releasing position when said movable lens barrel is in said collapsed position.

2. A camera as defined in claim 1, further comprising a biasing mechanism for biasing said cover stopper to said stopping position, wherein said slidable cover includes an engageable portion formed with a surface thereof, and said biasing mechanism moves said cover stopper to said stopping position when said slidable cover is set in said open position, to engage said engageable portion with a distal end of said cover stopper.

3. A camera as defined in claim 2, wherein said cover stopper is disposed in said camera body and in a rotatable manner on a plane extending across a moving direction of said slidable cover, and an opening is formed in said
5 slidable cover, for allowing engagement of said distal end with said engageable portion.

4. A camera as defined in claim 3, wherein said engageable portion comprises a locking recess.

5. A camera as defined in claim 3, wherein said
10 locking mechanism includes:

a ring-shaped member for rotating according to movement of said movable lens barrel; and

a projection, formed on said ring-shaped member, for being set behind said cover stopper when said movable lens
15 barrel is set in said photographing position, to block rotation of said cover stopper from said stopping position to said releasing position, and for being set away from said cover stopper when said movable lens barrel is set in substantially in said collapsed position, to cause said
20 cover stopper to move from said stopping position to said releasing position forcibly by movement of said slidable cover to said closed position.

6. A camera as defined in claim 5, further comprising:

25 a switch for changing over from a first state to a second state upon movement of said slidable cover to said open position;

a motor for rotating forwards upon a change of said switch from said first state to said second state, and for
30 rotating backwards upon a change of said switch from said second state to said first state;

a transmission gear mechanism for transmitting rotation of said motor to said movable lens barrel, to move said movable lens barrel from said collapsed position to said photographing position when said motor rotates forwards, and to move said movable lens barrel from said photographing position to said collapsed position when said motor rotates backwards.

7. A camera as defined in claim 6, wherein said ring-shaped member is rotated by said transmission gear mechanism.

8. A camera as defined in claim 7, further comprising a stationary barrel, formed to project forwards from said camera body, for supporting said movable lens barrel movably in forward and backward directions;

wherein said ring-shaped member is secured to an outer surface of said stationary barrel in a rotatable manner.

9. A camera as defined in claim 8, further comprising a front cover, secured to a front of said camera body, and a slide supporting mechanism, having at least one straight portion, for securing said slidable cover to said front cover in a slidable manner.

10. A camera as defined in claim 9, wherein said slide supporting mechanism includes:

a projection formed to project from said slidable cover; and

a rail groove, formed in said front cover, for receiving said projection, to keep said slidable cover slidable.